

**OPENING STATEMENT
CHAIRMAN KEN CALVERT
CHAIRMAN, SPACE AND AERONAUTICS SUBCOMMITTEE
COMMITTEE ON SPACE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
JULY 14, 2005**

Although we are all disappointed about the Space Shuttle Discovery's scrubbed mission yesterday, we are looking forward to NASA safely returning to flight in the next few days. Our civil space program excites the world. In a Gallup poll released this week, more than three-fourths of the American public support a new plan for space exploration. Yesterday, nearly 50 Members of the House of Representatives and several Senators went to the launch to witness the return to flight after nearly two and a half years since the Columbia accident.

Today's markup is a great event. We are having a full committee markup of the NASA Authorization bill for 2005. The last time that we had a NASA Authorization bill was in 2000. I want to commend Chairman Boehlert and Ranking Members Gordon and Udall for their cooperation in carefully crafting this bipartisan bill for our mark up today. It has taken numerous meetings of the principals and long, hard hours of staff work on both sides to come to this very complex and balanced agreement. We will be offering a bipartisan Manager's amendment to the bill that Members of the Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee marked up two weeks ago and reflects the agreements made over the last couple of weeks.

The bill endorses the President's Vision for Space Exploration – the first time that this has been done since the President announced his Vision January 14, 2004. The NASA Authorization bill of 2005 is a very balanced two-year bill with support for human spaceflight, science, and aeronautics.

Because NASA is undergoing a major transformation with its new Administrator, Dr. Mike Griffin, we have asked for a number of strategic plans in the areas of aeronautics, science, human capital and facilities, including the test facilities. The bill addresses the need for NASA to make better use of commercial products, including software, as well as to work with entrepreneurs in accomplishing NASA's goals. We also include a version of "Nunn-McCurdy" cost containment language that has been crafted for NASA and its development programs. Also, by remaining silent on the Shuttle program's length of operation, the bill provides the Administrator the flexibility to move forward with his plan to retire the Shuttle program in 2010. Ending the Shuttle program at this time will free up funding to accelerate the development of the Crew Exploration Vehicle (CEV) and to help to close the gap between the Shuttle and the CEV.

NASA has promised Congress a number of other reports this fall in such areas as the number of Shuttle flights planned before its retirement; a description of the Crew

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Exploration Vehicle; a description of any heavy lift vehicle that NASA may plan to develop; a plan for servicing the Hubble Space Telescope following the second test flight of the Shuttle; and the research agenda for the International Space Station and its proposed final configuration. These are key issues currently before the Agency that Congress will examine over the next year. We have asked the Office of Science and Technology Policy to look at R&D programs across the Federal Government and to document all programs that may be duplicative in multiple agencies and also those that may have fallen through the cracks. We have also asked for NASA to consider various business models as it looks at the Agency's restructuring. ALL of this information will enable Congress to craft legislation in the future which parallels the exciting changes and challenges NASA will face in the coming years.

Again, I want to thank our Committee leadership and our hardworking staff for their efforts in putting together this bill. We hope to have the bill on the Floor next week, and, hopefully to conference with the Senate once their bill clears the Senate floor. This is an important milestone for the Science Committee.

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